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The Open School Door

A Series of Articles on Clinton County Schools and Their Problems

By JAMES EGAN, Principal

DeWitt High School

What are the student eligibility rules for athletics? Who decides what students are eligible? What can happen if a team plays with an ineligible player?

The last question is perhaps easiest to answer first. The team that uses an ineligible player can usually have no chance to count the games played as victories, if won. If ineligible players are continuously used after the school has been warned or penalized before then, in extreme cases, the school's complete athletic program may be suspended from all competition.

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WHO DOES the suspending and why? The Michigan High School Athletic association, a part of the Department of Public Instruction, is the official regulating agency. This is the legal organization that controls all high school athletic events in Michigan.

The main reason for the exsistence of the athletic association is to provide for equal rules of competition among schools of our state. This involves providing properly certified game officials, legal basis for all athletic events, regulating the numbers and kinds of the games permitted, providing arrangements for the state sports championships, and even providing official rules of the game.

Of course, the part we are concerned with here is the eligibility of the players — of teams remaining amateur and not professional. Let's look into and list some of the more important regulations.

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1. ENROLLMENT — A student must have been enrolled in a high school not later than Monday of the fourth week of the present semester.

2. Age — A student must be under 19-years of age at time of contest unless his 19th birthday occurrs on or after Sept. 1 of a current school year, in which case he is eligible for the balance of that school year.

3. Physical Examination —A student must have passed a satisfactory physical examination during the present school year. Record of this ord — A student must have received at least 15 credit hours for work taken during his last regular semester of enrollment (three full-time courses).

7. Current Semester Record —A student must be carrying successfully at least 15 credit hours of work during the present semester. (Three full-time courses).

8. Transfers — Parent, parents, guardian, or other person with whom a student has been living during the period of their last high school enrollment, generally must have moved out of the district or service area of the high school a student previously attended and into the district or service area of the high school a student is now attending.

9. Awards — A student must not accept any award for athletic performance other than a trophy having a value of not more than $3. A trophy is defined as a medal, ribbon, badge, plaque, cup, banner, picture, or ring. (We understand that the amount will be slightly raised this year).

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10. AMATEUR Practices — A student must not accept any money or other valuable consideration (merchandise, etc.) for participating in any form of athletics, sport, or games, for officiating in intersholastic athletic contests, or have signed a contract with a professional baseball team.

11. Limited Team Membership — A student must not participate in any athletic competition during the season in a sport not under the sponsorship of a high school, after a student has represented a school in that sport. A student must not participate in any so-called charity or exhibition games in football or basektball.

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IT SHOULD always be remembered that all of the above-mentioned regulations are concerned with keeping all the schools on a fair, equal competitive basis. No school should have any unfair edge on any other school and, only by a legally-constituted body such as the MHSAA, can this be done effectively.

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3. Physical Examination —A student must have passed a satisfactory physical examination during the present school year. Record of this examination must be on file in the high school office.

4. Season of Competition — A student must not have competed for more than four first and four second semester seasons in a sport in a four-year high school; or for more than three each first and second semester seasons, in a three-year high school.

5. Undergraduate Standing —A student must not be a high school graduate.

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6. **PREVIOUS** Semester Record — A student must have received at least 15 credit hours for work taken during his last regular semester of enrollment (three full-time courses).

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Very soon, we will be starting a series of articles in this column on the different Clinton county area school systems. The series will include an over-all picture of curriculum, activities, connected organizations, and a few of the problems of the local school system.

Be sure and watch for your school.

People at the race track may get a lot of bitter experience, but they never learn to cut out the horse-play.